

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (cancelled)
2. (original) An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image carrier, rotatably supported, for carrying a toner image;
a peripheral rotary body involved in image formation, which is rotatably supported in a periphery of the image carrier; and
control means for controlling displacement of the peripheral rotary body in a direction proximate to the image carrier so as to maintain a predetermined positional relationship between the image carrier and the peripheral rotary body, the control means being so configured that an acting point of impacting force, which is generated in between the image carrier and the peripheral rotary body at a time of image formation, is located on an axis of the image carrier between a position of an axial end portion of the image carrier and a position nearby in which the image carrier is supported.
3. (original) The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the control means is made of a material having shock absorbency.
4. (original) The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the control means includes:

a first control member loosely fitted to a shaft of the image carrier; and

a second control member loosely fitted to a shaft of the peripheral rotary body, the first and second control means abutting against each other.

5. (original) The image forming apparatus of claim 2, wherein the control means is arranged outwardly away from the axial end portion of the peripheral rotary body.

6. (currently amended) ~~The image forming apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:~~ An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier, rotatably supported, for carrying a toner image;

a peripheral rotary body involved in image formation, which is rotatably supported in a periphery of the image carrier; and

control means for controlling displacement of the peripheral rotary body in a direction proximate to the image carrier so as to maintain a predetermined positional relationship between the image carrier and the peripheral rotary body, the control means being so configured that an acting point of impacting force, which is generated in between the image carrier and the peripheral rotary body at a time of image formation, is located on an axis of the image carrier between a position of an axial

end portion of the image carrier and a position nearby in which the image carrier is supported, and

oscillation control means for controlling oscillation of ~~each of the first and second~~ the control members means.

7. (original) The image forming apparatus of claim 6, wherein the oscillation control means is so configured as to inhibit rotation of the first and second control members.

8. (original) The image forming apparatus of claim 6, wherein the abutment portion of the first control member, which abuts against the second control member, is so configured as to protrude outwardly relative to the other non-abutting portions.

9. (original) The image forming apparatus of claim 6, wherein a helical gear is provided as driving force transmitting means for rotatably driving at least one of the image carrier and the peripheral rotary body.

10 - 19 (cancelled)

20. (new) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier, rotatably supported, for carrying a toner image;

a peripheral rotary body involved in image formation, which is rotatably supported in a periphery of the image carrier;

a first control member provided on a first rotary shaft of the image carrier;

a second control member provided on a second rotary shaft of the peripheral rotary body, and

oscillation control means for controlling oscillation of each of the first and second control members,

the first and second control members being so configured that a distance between the first and second rotary shafts is maintained at a predetermined distance by abutment of the first and second control members against each other.

21. (new) The image forming apparatus of claim 20, wherein the oscillation control means is so configured as to inhibit rotation of the first and second control members.

22. (new) The image forming apparatus of claim 20, wherein the abutment portion of the first control member, which abuts against the second control member, is so configured as to protrude outwardly relative to the other non-abutting portions.

23. (new) The image forming apparatus of claim 20, wherein a helical gear is provided as driving force transmitting means for rotatably driving at least one of the image carrier and the peripheral rotary body.